(c) if so, the steps being taken for their improvement;

(d) whether LPT relay centre has been sanctioned for Rath town in Hamirpur district; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY) : (a) 2 Very Low Power TV transmitters (VLPTs), one each at Ashapuri and Nehri, have been sanctioned for further expansion of Doordarshan network in Himachal Pradesh during the last four months.

(b) and (c) All the existing TV transmitters in Himachal Pradesh, except the VLPT at Jahalma, are reported to be functioning satisfactorily. The repair work in respect of the VLPT, Jahalma is presently held up due to road blockage and snowfall.

(d) and (e) A Low Power TV transmitter (LPT) is already under implementation at Rath in Hamirpur district of Uttar Pradesh.

Barren Land Development Programme in Maharashtra

280. SHRI DATTA MEGHE : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the projects approved under Barren Land Development Programme in Maharashtra during the last three years;

(b) the details of projects pending for approval with the Union Government and the reasons for their pendency;

(c) the time by which sanction is likely to be accorded in regard there to ;

(d) the number of projects getting finance from foreign agencies under Barren Land Development Programme in the State ;

(e) the details of the projects under implementation in the state at present; and

(f) the time by which these projects are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI KINJARAPPU YERRANNAIDU) : (a) There is no Barren Land Development Programme in the Department of Wastelands Development , Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment. However, the Department is implementing an Integrated Wastelands Development project scheme in Maharashtra State. Two projects under IWDP scheme have been sanctioned for Nasik and Ahmednagar districts . The IWDP in Nasik district was sanctioned in 1992-93 for a period of 4 years at a total cost of Rs.156.73 lakhs for development of 1700 ha. of wastelands. The IWDP in Ahmednagar district was sanctioned in 1994-95 for a period of 3 years at a total cost of 42.03 lakhs for development of 531 ha. of wastelands. The IWDP in Nasik district has been completed and IWDP in Ahmednagar districts is likely to be completed during 1997-98. No such project has been approved under Integrated Wasteland Development project Scheme during the last three years in the State except in Ahmednagar district.

(b) and (c) No Integrated Wastelands Development Project proposal from the state of Maharashtra is pending in the Department for sanction.

(d) to (f) There is no such project funded by foreign agencies is under implementation in the state .

Privatisation of AI / IA

281. SHRIMATI KETAKI DEVI SINGH :
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :
SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether any proposal of Privatisation of Air India and Indian Airlines is under consideration of the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATRAJAN) : (a) to (c) Air India Limited figures in the list of 40 Public sector Enterprises (PSEs) referred by the Government to the Disinvestment Commission for drawing up a comprehensive and long term disinvestment programme for these PSEs.

At present , there is no proposal to disinvest the equity capital in Indian Airlines.

[English]

Provision of Finance to Film Industry

282. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether recent incidents in Mumbai have confirmed a nexus between the film industry and the underworld;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) whether the film industry of the country depends on the finance provided by the underworld;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) Whether the Government propose to set-up a separate agency to provide finance to the film industry; and

(f) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S.JAIPAL REDDY) : (a) to (d) The Central Government do not have any information in this regard.

(e) and (f) The National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) has been set up for the purpose of financing and promoting good cinema and promoting the integrated development of the Indian film industry. NFDC offers finance to the film industry in the form of film finance, co-production of films,co-production with Doordarshan and finance for theatres.

[Translation]

Local Branch of SAIL Duped by Private Company

283. SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that a private Company has duped the local branch of SAIL in Ghaziabad; and

(b) if so, the amount involved therein and the action taken by the Government against the said Company for doing so and to recover this amount ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) and (b) Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL) has informed Ministry of Steel about one of its customers, to whom steel materials were supplied, having defrauded its Branch at Ghaziabad (U.P.) to the tune of over Rs. 2 crores in the recent past.

In order to recover the amount due to SAIL from the Company, SAIL has taken a number of steps including lodging of an FIR with local police, approaching the relevant bank alongwith the police to freeze all accounts maintained by the various Directors of the Company, initiating criminal proceedings under Negotiable Instruments Act against the dishonoured cheques and filing of Civil Suit for granting injuction order restraining the Company, their agents and servants from disposing of the properties etc.

[English]

Development of Sabarmati Railway Station

284. SHRI VIJAY PATEL :
SHRI DILEEP SANGHANI :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have examined the issue of overcrowding of the Ahmedabad railway station;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any plan to develop Sabarmati railway station to ease the congestion at Ahmedabad station;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the other alternative arrangements planned by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) and (b) There is no overcrowding at Ahmedabad station at present.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Adequate terminal facilities are available at Ahmedabad railway station to cater to the present level of traffic.

[Translation]

Black Marketing of Free Rail Coupons

285. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY:
SHRI RAMSAGAR :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any incident of black marketing of free railway coupons of Members of Parliament/Members of Legislative Assembly have come to the notice of the Government through print media in the recent past ;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government made any investigation in this regard;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof;

(e) whether any person has been arrested in this regard; and

(f) if so, the action taken against him ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) Yes,Sir. The news was published in Rashtriya Sahara on 10.9.97 and Dainik Jagran on 11.9.97.

(b) A private person was purchasing railway tickets in bulk by exchanging Rail Travel Coupons (RTCs) meant for existing/ex. MLAs of Bihar Legislature. The person was also selling RTCs on concessional rates.

(c) Yes, Sir. The suspect was caught red-handed while selling TRCs worth Rs.30,000/- to a decoy on cash